



ONE TONNE OF
CRUSHED GLASS
SAVES
1.2
TONNES OF RAW
MATERIALS

ONE TONNE OF
CRUSHED GLASS
PREVENTS
700
KG OF CO₂ GOING
INTO THE ATMOSPHERE
(Scope 1, 2 & 3)



ERITH MULTIPLE PROJECTS

Collaboration and education

With over 50 years of providing sustainable enabling services, Erith stands as a prominent contractor specialising in turnkey solutions for clients across the UK. The alignment of Erith's five-year strategic plan and daily activities with the UN Sustainable Development Goals underpins their commitment to innovation and positive interventions to achieve sustainable development.

Erith has cultivated numerous sustainability opportunities during deconstruction works and has established expertise in recycling concrete and steel. By keeping abreast of the latest advancements in recycling, Erith seamlessly incorporates new capabilities into its existing procedures. As the company grows, this focus on sustainability not only enhances its operations but also reinforces its commitment to responsible demolition and construction practices.

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David Entwistle, Director of Major Operations, and Richard Calcutt, Technical Project Manager from Saint-Gobain Glass, along with Rebecca Hartwell from EOC, approached Erith with a compelling proposal to participate in the Glass Forever programme. With their previously established success, they highlighted the significant benefits this partnership would bring to Erith's operations.

The collaboration began with a trial period during which Erith's teams were educated on the different types of glass that can and cannot be recycled. This training was crucial to understanding how Erith could seamlessly integrate the recycling process into its operations without disrupting project timelines and workflow. Equipped with these newfound insights, Erith was well-prepared to implement these practices across other operational sites, leading to several successful glass recovery projects.

One of the key learnings for the Erith team was the importance of ensuring that the collected glass was free of contaminants. To tackle this, Erith employed two collection methods for laminated and toughened glass: using a breaking table and a nickel-free cutting blade to process the glass and place it into specialist one-tonne collection bags. This meticulous approach ensured the purity of the recycled glass, enhancing the quality and efficiency of the recycling process.

Erith also innovatively improved the containment of cullet bags to fit into elevator lifts without compromising the volume of glass collected. This adjustment not only streamlined the collection process but also maintained operational efficiency.

A unique aspect of Erith's involvement was their use of their own transport to bring the collected glass back to their operations centre. This centralised collection point allowed Saint-Gobain Glass to efficiently gather the glass, enabling the inclusion of smaller projects in the overall collection efforts. By aggregating the glass from multiple sites, the cumulative volume became more impactful.

DEBUNKING MYTHS

Unlike traditional glass removal processes, adopting a sustainable approach requires demolition teams to have a thorough understanding of the various types of glass on-site and what can and cannot be recycled. This knowledge must also encompass the best methods for segregating, packaging, and transporting the glass to prevent contamination. It's natural to assume this would be a lengthy and cumbersome process that could impact project delivery times. However, with the support of the Glass Forever programme, this is not the case.

Erith's collaboration with Saint-Gobain Glass has led to constant learning and adaptation in waste glass collection. Understanding the best methods to deglaze and recover glass from different sites is an ongoing process. Each site presents unique challenges, and working together ensures maximum glass recovery, contributing to the circular economy. The ambition is

to implement these sustainable practices on all projects. With Erith's established transport and holding processes, this goal is increasingly viable, practical, and sensible. Regular reviews help improve and share best practices and respond to stakeholder feedback.

As programmes and processes have become standard practice on projects, this sustainable approach has grown easily and organically. The collaboration between Erith and Saint-Gobain Glass exemplifies how ongoing learning and innovation can lead to effective, sustainable demolition practices.

"I look forward to working on many more projects like this with Saint-Gobain Glass."

SHEQ (Safety, Health, Environment and Quality) Director Chris Turok-Hallam comments, "Engagement and openness are key pillars to our success with Saint-Gobain Glass and the Glass Forever Programme. We are in progressive conversations with our industry peers on how to collectively improve our approach and output to sustainability, and our learning with Glass Forever puts us in a great position to engage in this further. With every project, we can push both our boundaries of understanding and project practicalities. It's an exciting time to experiment and grow, and Saint-Gobain Glass has been a great partner on that learning journey."

Richard Calcutt, Technical Project Manager from Saint-Gobain Glass, adds, "We first engaged with the Erith team in the Summer of 2023 and have since grown to cover multiple projects across London. The trial period was key to this success. Being able to test on a small site, and understand challenges, logistics, and solutions has enabled a clear path forward, and Erith is a phenomenal team to work with."

A lead ambassador for the implementation of the Glass Forever programme within Erith is Andy Craig, Environmental and Sustainability Manager, who is very pleased with the results: "Getting this ingrained in our process as a standard way of working is a huge step forward in our continued sustainability efforts. I'm proud of the teams and all that they have achieved, and I look forward to working on many more projects like this with Saint-Gobain Glass."

Get in touch:

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